

**CITY OF IONIA
CITY COUNCIL
SPECIAL MEETING
APRIL 23, 2007
CITY HALL
COUNCIL CHAMBERS**

CALL TO ORDER

Deputy Mayor Patrick called the Special Meeting of the City Council to order at 6:00 PM and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL

Roll call revealed Councilmembers Gordon Kelley (arrived at 6:30 PM), Kim Patrick, Bruce Roetman, Jim Smith, Jeff Winters, Brenda Cowling-Cronk, and Bob O'Mara present. Mayor Balice was excused and Councilmember Miller was absent.

Staff present included City Manager Jason Eppler and Finance Director Robin Marhofer.

PUBLIC COMMENTS AND INFORMATION

Deputy Mayor Patrick called for public comments. There were no public comments.

BOARD DECISIONS AND ACTION ITEMS

B#1 Request from St. Johns Episcopal Church – Tree Removal: This matter was originally discussed by Council at the April 10, 2007 regular meeting. St. Johns Episcopal Church has requested that the Basswood tree located in the street right-of-way on the Washington Street side of their property be removed. Their desire for having the tree removed is based on problems with the roof gutters and downspouts becoming plugged from the leaves of the tree. The Church originally made this request to the City Manager who denied the request based on the request not being consistent with the standards contained in the City Code for tree removal. Due to the Church's concerns, however, he did have a Public Works Department crew trim the tree in order to alleviate the problem.

Mr. Wesley Hackett, representing the Church, spoke regarding the Church's request and reiterated the fact that the Church would pay to have the tree removed and plant additional trees along Washington Street.

It was moved by Deputy Mayor Patrick to permit the removal of the tree subject to specific conditions. The motion died due to a lack of support.

No further action regarding this request was taken by Council.

B#2 Review of Proposed FY07-08 Budget: City Manager Eppler and Finance Director Marhofer reviewed with Council on a fund by fund basis the proposed City budget for FY07-08. Revenues and expenditures were reviewed. The millage rates to support the various funds are proposed as follows:

General Fund	3.00 mills
General Fund – Public Safety	1.20 mills
Solid Waste Fund	1.70 mills
Dial-A-Ride Fund	.7492
Environmental Fund	.70 mills (debt)
	.85 mills (environmental response)

The City Manager stated that staff is also proposing an increase in utility rates effective July 1, 2007 as follows:

Water- commodity rate	\$1.75 to \$1.85/1,000 gallons
Water – debt service	\$9.75 to 11.25/quarter
Sewer – commodity rate	\$2.75 to \$2.85/1,000 gallons
Sewer – debt service	\$27.00 to \$30.00/quarter

He further explained the need to raise rates as being twofold. First, to offset increases in the cost of operation for both utilities due to adjustments in gas and electric costs, chemical costs and staff costs. Second, to generate dollars to continue replacing aging components associated with the water distribution system and sanitary sewer collection system. Projects of priority over the next two fiscal years include Division Street, Mill Street, Pearl Street, Union Street and M-21.

Council also reviewed the amortization schedules associated with existing City debt and the Capital Improvement Plan which is an illustrative list of potential future City purchases/projects.

The City Manager explained that the next steps in the budget adoption process include setting the Public Hearings on the budget and rate ordinance at the May 1, 2007 meeting. The Public Hearings on the budget and rate ordinance will then be held at the June 5, 2007 at which time Council will be asked to approve both documents.

INCIDENTAL INFORMATION

Council discussed the timeframe of the removal of the Clothing Care buildings and the status of the alley that one of the buildings is built over.

INFORMATION OR ACTION ON LEGAL MATTERS

None.

INFORMATION FROM MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL

None.

ADJOURNMENT

Deputy Mayor Patrick adjourned the meeting at 7:55 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jason Eppler
Recording Secretary